

PRIVATE RICHARD BUBB DAY

793, 1st Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment

Died aged 34 on 29 October 1914

Remembered with honour on the *Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial*; Panel 22 and 34

Commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross and in the Abbey



Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial



1914 (Mons) Star & Clasp



Gloucestershire Regiment

RICHARD BUBB DAY was born in Tewkesbury in 1881 to Richard James Day, a bricklayer, and his first wife, Mary Ann (formerly Newman), of Clays Building, both born in Tewkesbury; they had a total of four children. Mary Ann died in March 1889 and Richard James re-married that December to Elizabeth Eleanor, widow of Samuel Cox, landlord of the Forester's Arms, 40 High Street. The 1891 Census shows that, after the marriage, Richard James became the pub's landlord. By 1901 the family had moved to the prestigious Blenheim Villas, which Richard James is said to have built. He died in 1913.

Richard Bubb Day's military service was lengthy and varied. He served originally as a part-time soldier with the Militia in 2nd Volunteer Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment. In March 1901 he enlisted in the 1st Battalion as a regular soldier for a Short Service engagement of one year with the Colours or until the end of the **South African (Boer) War**. When the war ended in May 1902 he was discharged on return; he was awarded the *South Africa Medal*. It was reported in the press that '*Richard Day was presented with a Bible at the Baptist Chapel by the pastor Rev. H. J. Preece. [Afterwards] There was a church parade for volunteers in Khaki.*'

At the end of 1903 Richard was living in Berwick St. John, near Tisbury in Wiltshire, working as a bricklayer, probably for Collins & Godfrey. In January 1904 he re-enlisted in Devizes as a part-time soldier, in the 3rd Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment. His service was short-lived as he purchased his discharge in May 1904; the reason is unclear but he probably moved back to Tewkesbury because of his employment. Richard then re-joined the

Gloucestershire Regiment sometime around 1909, almost certainly as a part-time soldier. His service number suggests that he joined the 3rd (Special Reserve) Battalion, providing reinforcement drafts for the active service battalions.

As a reservist Richard was recalled to the Colours soon after the outbreak of war and posted to the 1st Battalion, part of the 1st Division, one of the original units of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) and one of the first to move to France. It disembarked at Le Havre on 13 August 1914 and moved to Belgium where it was involved in the *Battle of Mons* and subsequent retreat, as well as the *Battles of the Marne* (7-10 September) and the *Aisne* (12-15 September). Richard arrived in France on 11 September 1914, as a reinforcement. The BEF then moved north to protect the Channel ports which were vital to its supply line and to take part in the 'Race to the Sea'. During the first *Battle of Ypres 1914*, the Battalion carried out an unsuccessful attack in the *Battle of Langemarck* (21-24 October); the Germans counter-attacked and the battalion suffered 127 casualties. The village was lost but the line held. The Germans then switched the attack where the battalion lost a further 167 men during the *Battle of Gheluvelt* (29-31 October).

Private Richard Bubb Day was one of these casualties. His body was not recovered or identified, and he is commemorated instead on the *Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing*. He was awarded the '*1914 (Mons) Star and Clasp*'.

Richard's younger brother, **Henry** (Harry), followed him, enlisting in the Wiltshire Regiment in 1903 until discharged on 29 February 1916 because of sickness.